



Summer 2010

Change to Retailer Authorization & Re-authorization Selection Criteria

The Montana WIC Program uses established criteria to evaluate and select retailers for initial and continuing participation in the WIC Program.

In the past, Montana WIC did not require that retail applicants be authorized to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, but as of October 2010 that will change. All new retail applicants and all authorized retailers, whose contracts are up for renewal will have to meet this criteria and be authorized to accept SNAP benefits in order to continue to accept WIC benefits.

This change has been brought on by Program efforts to automate the WIC benefit redemption process to an EBT system. Montana WIC currently has an EBT Planning Grant and hopes to have the system in place within the next three years. SNAP authorized retailers often have integrated systems, electronic terminals and scanning equipment necessary for EBT readiness.

If your Montana WIC contract is up for renewal in 2011 and you are not currently authorized to accept SNAP, please contact SNAP at (406)441-1190 to find out how to apply.

If you have questions about your WIC contract call 800-433-4298, option 2.

Montana WIC Facts - May 2010

- Montana WIC participants served 21,050
- Authorized retailers 202
- Dollars redeemed \$997,049.76
- Benefits paid 47,161
- Benefits rejected 394
- Top rejection reasons:
 - \Rightarrow Missing stamp 228
 - \Rightarrow Illegible stamp 92
 - ⇒ Over Max Price 33⇒ Missing Signature 17

Please share this information with your staff.

Price Survey 2

Similac Label Changes

Infant Formula Purchase List

Fruit & 3 Vegetable Reminder

About WIC

Farm direct 4

8th Continent Label Change

Price Survey

With the Montana WIC Program's move to a new computer system and peer groups, price surveys will now be issued and collected every six months instead of every three!

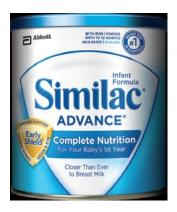
The last survey was conducted in February and the next survey will be distributed in August. The new computer system was suppose to contain an electronic version of the price survey, but that is not functioning at this point. We will continue with the paper survey until this is resolved.

Minimum Stocking Requirements

WIC customers shop with their WIC benefits every day of the month. To meet contract requirements and the needs of WIC customers, retailers must have at least the minimum quantities of WIC foods on the shelf at all times to meet the needs of WIC participants.

The WIC contract requires authorized stores to carry enough WIC contract formula to serve WIC customers. Most WIC infants are issued powered formula and they typically receive 8 to 10 cans of powdered formula each month.

Changes were made in May to the three required Similac infant formulas as described in the Spring edition of the Retailer Newsletter and can be found pictured below. The size and name changes have also been included on the enclosed Minimum Stocking Requirements list. Please remove page 49 from your Retail Reference Manual and replace it with the enclosed sheet.







Formula Purchase Sites

Federal policies require State WIC agencies to publish a List of <u>Formula Wholesalers</u>, <u>Distributors</u>, <u>Retailers</u>, <u>and Manufacturers</u> from which retailers must purchase their infant formula. This is to ensure that the formula has not been compromised. The 2010 list is posted on Montana WIC's website www.wic.mt.gov.

Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Refresher

In November 2009, Montana WIC participants, staff, and authorized stores made the biggest change in WIC history a huge success! The new food package, now offered in all 50 states, brings better health and nutrition to all WIC families.

Below is a refresher for long-time and new store employees. Make sure everyone that handles WIC transactions has a chance to read this.

Fruits and vegetables: What can WIC shoppers buy?

The Fruit & Vegetable Benefit allows Montana WIC participants to buy fresh fruits and vegetables and/or frozen vegetables. The WIC Food List provides a guide to figure out which items are allowed, but some items cause confusion at check out. The lists below answers some of the questions store employees have asked.

Allowed: Cactus leaf Celery root Coconut Garlic Peppers/chilies Pumpkin - undecorated Shallots Sprouts	Not allowed - not a fruit or vegetable: Aloe-Vera Banana leaves Corn husks Sugarcane Vanilla bean Wheatgrass	Not allowed - herbs: Anise Basil Bay leaves Caraway Chives Cilantro Dill Fenugreek Horseradish	Lemongrass Marjoram Mint Oregano Parsley Rosemary Sage Savory Tarragon Thyme
Sprouts		Horseradish	Thyme
Tomatillos			

WIC Provides Good Food and a Whole Lot More

WIC is a nutrition program that provides nutrition and health education, breastfeeding support, and referrals to other services free of charge to Montana families who qualify. WIC stands for "Special Supplemental Nutrition program for Women, Infants and Children".

WIC offers families:

Yucca root

- ⇒ Tips for eating well to improve health
- ⇒ Breastfeeding promotion and support
- ⇒ Benefits to buy healthy food
- ⇒ Immunization screening and referrals
- ⇒ Health and social service referrals

WIC appreciates you being a partner with us in providing nutritious food to Montana's families!



Montana WIC Program Page 4

8th Continent Soymilk Label Change

Changes in the packaging of one of the WIC approved soy milk beverages will be hitting stores soon.









Welcome Farm Direct!

In May 2010, Montana WIC began authorizing local farmers to accept the Fruit & Vegetable Benefit at farmers' markets or roadside stands. Many Montana farmers have been participating in the summer Farmers' Market Nutrition Program for several years. This is a wonderful opportunity for WIC shoppers to have access to locally grown produce!

Remember: \$6 Farmers' Market Nutrition Program benefits can only be accepted by farmers. If a WIC shopper tries to spend one in your grocery store, do not accept it and refer them to the WIC clinic. A FMNP benefit is pictured below so you know what to watch for.





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225 copies of <u>MONTANA WIC RETAILER NEWSLETTER</u> were published at an estimated cost of \$0.122 per copy, for a total cost of \$27.45 for printing and \$99.00 for distribution.

Who do you call?

Retailers should contact their **Local WIC Agency** for concerns regarding complaints and general program questions.

Contact **Trish Kurek (406-444-5530)** at the State WIC office if your store will be changing ownership or you have guestions about your contract.

Contact Carrie Reynolds (406-444-4746) at the State WIC office when issues arise with WIC benefits or prices change for WIC approved foods.

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